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LB 407

direct channel to Panhandle Community Services Health Center, that is located in western Nebraska and serves the 11 counties of the Panhandle. And although there are other more direct designations for the funding that ends up going to the Charles Drew Health Center and the One World Community Health Center in the Omaha area, this funding actually would go to medically underserved areas or populations. You'll notice that Panhandle Community Services, located in the Panhandle and serving those 11 counties, has an annual number of visits of over 46,000. And their patients, 86 percent of those are below the poverty level. And if you look at the One World...and the reality is, Panhandle Community Services receives \$164,000 a year relating to minority health, for the annual number of visits of 46,165. One World Community Health and Charles Drew in Omaha are scheduled to get \$700,000 a year for annual visits, respectively, of 20,000 and 23,000. Now, the relevant issue here is the minority health. And the Scottsbluff center, the Panhandle Community Services, it's my understanding, serves about 60...60 percent of their visits are minorities, whereas Charles Drew and One World are at about 98 percent. And I acknowledge that up front, because I believe that it is relevant to the subject here. But the reality of the matter is, I believe that we can be more equitable in the funds that go out. And I'm not attempting to take funds away from the two centers in Omaha. But I'm looking at available funds, the tobacco settlement funds, to channel to a needy area. And when you look at the needs of a community and the health center, the Panhandle Community Services Health Center is a very efficiently run operation. They work hard to collaborate. Obviously, there are 11 counties that they serve, all 11 counties of the Panhandle. And the population distribution is very spread out, making it at times more expensive. And so that's why some of these numbers seem a bit complicated. But the fact is that the need is there. And I'm not trying to take anyone else's funding away. I'm just trying to make things more equitable. And I would urge your support and adoption of AM1884. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Smith. You've heard the opening on AM1884, offered by Senator Smith to LB 407. Open for discussion on that amendment. Senators wishing to speak, Senators Jensen, Beutler, Kruse, Stuthman, Smith. Senator